

Coins

Old standbys' new editions head for reference shelves

By Roger Boye

NUMISMATIC BOOK publishers have been cranking out 1978 editions of the basic coin collecting references. Here are brief reports on two of them, and some notes about other recent offerings from the hobby press.

• "Handbook of United States Coins," by R. S. Yeoman, 35th edition. Although the format of the 1978 "Blue Book" is almost identical to those of past years, a few coin prices have shown handsome increases. Among these are the values for 20-cent pieces, some half-cents and large cents, and 2- and 3-cent pieces.

However, most 20th-Century coins recorded only minuscule price advances, and as usual, coins in the top conditions recorded the better price appreciation when compared with the lesser grade coins.

Unlike most price catalogs, the Blue Book lists "average dealer" buying prices for coins, rather than selling prices. It is especially useful for collectors who anticipate selling some of their numismatic treasures in the next year.

The book, which is sold in most hobby stores, costs only \$2.95 — not bad for a hard-cover edition.

• "Standard Catalogue of Canadian Coins, Tokens and Paper Money," by James E. Charlton, 26th edition. Charlton has made some highly visible revisions in what has become the most popular reference on Canadian money. For example, the new edition has a redesigned cover, 52 additional pages (now 341 pages in all), an improved coin grading guide, and a greatly expanded section on tokens.

As always, the soft-cover catalog includes retail values of Canadian coins and bills, along with the historical and other collector data from past editions.

This book is also available in many hobby stores, or can be ordered from the publisher, Charlton International Publishing Inc., 299 Queen St. West, Toronto, Canada M5V 1Z9. The cost is \$4.50.

• "Grading Coins: A Collection of Readings," edited by Richard Bagg and James J. Jelinski. Nearly 40 articles from three coin publications are reprinted in this volume. When the articles are compared (the earliest is from the 1892 Numismatist; the latest is from the same publication, December, 1976, issue), one theme keeps re-emerging: The hobby needs a universally recognized grading standard for collectors and dealers.

Perhaps collectors will have such a standard when the new ANA grading guide rolls off the press in about a month. Meanwhile, the collection of readings is available for \$9.95 from Essex Numismatic Properties, Inc., Phoebe Hart House/The Hill, Portsmouth, N. H. 03801.

• "1978 Coin Calendar," by Krause Publications. This wall calendar would be a gold mine for collectors who pride themselves in knowing numismatic trivia. With it, for example, they could say that in 1792 today, George Washington claimed that the nation's first coin shortage was over. And if that didn't impress, they might mention that on this date in 1966, the first \$1 Federal Reserve notes were delivered to banks.

The 11-by-8½-inch pages include 12 color pictures. But as in the past, Krause tries to cram too much on the pages, including promotional items for the company's coin newspapers. For example, the words "World Coin News Deadline; Numismatic News Deadline" appear in large, red letters on each Tuesday throughout the calendar. The result is a tacky appearance, to say the least.

To order, send \$2 to Krause Publications, 700 E. State St., Iola, Wis. 54945.